

Message Text

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SUBJ: EC FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL, JUNE 6, 1978: LOME
CONVENTION RENEWAL

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 8415 (B) BRUSSELS 10452

1. THE JUNE 6 EC FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL ENGAGED IN A
GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE COMMUNITY'S APPROACH TO THE
UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS ON RENEWAL OF THE LOME CONVENTION.
NO FORMAL DECISIONS WERE TAKEN, AND THE EC COMMISSION
WILL NOW REFINE ITS PROPOSALS FOR A NEGOTIATING MANDATE,
IN LIGHT OF POSITIONS EXPRESSED BY THE MEMBER STATES
DURING THE COUNCIL MEETING. THE COUNCIL ITSELF IS EX-
PECTED TO HOLD A FINAL SUBSTANTIVE DEBATE ON THE MANDATE
AT ITS JUNE 26-27 SESSION.

2. PREDICTABLY, THE COUNCIL DEVOTED A GREAT DEAL OF TIME
TO THE QUESTION OF INCLUDING LANGUAGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN
LOME II. ACCORDING TO PERMREP SOURCES, UK FOREIGN
SECRETARY OWEN TOOK THE LEAD IN PRESSING FOR SOME KIND
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OF LANGUAGE IN THE BODY OF THE CONVENTION WHICH WOULD
ALLOW THE COMMUNITY TO CUT OFF AID TO ACP STATES WHICH
VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS. OWEN HIMSELF TOLD REPORTERS THAT,
ALTHOUGH THE COUNCIL TOOK NO FINAL DECISION, THERE WAS
GENERAL ACCEPTANCE THAT AT LEAST A PREAMBULAR PARAGRAPH
ON HUMAN RIGHTS WOULD BE "EXTREMELY HELPFUL." THE MORE
IMPORTANT AND MORE DIFFICULT TASK, SAID OWEN, WILL BE

HOW TO GIVE SUCH LANGUAGE A DEFINITE LEGAL BASIS ALLOWING THE COMMUNITY TO CUT OFF AID. HE INDICATED THAT, IN THIS REGARD, THE UK WILL BE FLEXIBLE ON SPECIFIC LEGAL PROVISIONS BUT FIRM ON THE PRINCIPLE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE CURRENT LOME CONVENTION IS NOT SATISFACTORY IN THIS REGARD, AS WAS DEMONSTRATED LAST YEAR WHEN THE COMMUNITY FOUND ITSELF FACED WITH A SITUATION IN UGANDA IN WHICH ITS ABILITY TO RESPOND WAS LIMITED. AT THAT TIME, THE ONLY WAY THE EC COULD HAVE CUT OFF AID TO THE AMIN REGIME WOULD HAVE BEEN THROUGH RENUNCIATION OF THE ENTIRE TREATY. (COMMENT: DESPITE OWEN'S REMARKS, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE EC HAS IN FACT SLOWED DOWN CERTAIN TYPES OF PROJECT AID TO UGANDA.) OWEN EMPHASIZED THAT THE EC NEEDS TO BE CAPABLE OF MORE FLEXIBLE RESPONSE UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES. A DANISH PERMDEL OFFICIAL TOLD US SEPARATELY THAT IT IS LIKELY THB NINE WILL REACH A COMMON POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN TIME FOR THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS ON LOME II, ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: A REFERENCE IN THE CONVENTION'S PREAMBLE TO THE NEED TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS, ACCOMPANIED BY AN "UNWRITTEN" UNDERSTANDING BY THE MEMBER STATES THAT EC WOULD REACT IN A TANGIBLE WAY TO PERSISTENT, FLAGRANT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY LOME SIGNATORIES.

3. OUR SOURCES SAY THAT DISCUSSION OF THE DURATION OF THE NEW CONVENTION WAS INCONCLUSIVE BUT THAT THE TREND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AMONG MEMBER STATES SEEMS TO BE TOWARD A LONGER-DURATION FRAMEWORK CONVENTION WITH SHORTER-TERM FINANCIAL AND AID PROVISIONS. WE ARE ALSO TOLD, HOWEVER, THAT COMMUNITY'S STANCE ON THIS QUESTION WILL LIKELY BE INFLUENCED BY ACP POSITION ADVANCED DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS. HINTON

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